

*Stated Meeting, February 20, 1863.*

Present, twenty-four members.

Dr. Wood, President, in the Chair.

A letter accepting membership, was received from Dr. I. I. Hayes, dated United States Army Hospital, West Philadelphia, February 2d, 1863, and afterwards Dr. Hayes was presented to the President, and took his seat.

Letters acknowledging the receipt of publications were received from the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, dated February 9th, requesting also a set of the Transactions; the Corporation of Yale College, February 11th, and Harvard College, February 4th; the Connecticut and New Jersey Historical Societies, 25th and 11th; the New York State Library, February 9th; Captain Gilliss, National Observatory, February 3d, and the Chicago Historical Society, February 9th, 1863.

Donations for the Library were received from the Boston Natural History Society, Professor Hall, of Albany, the Chief Engineer of the Philadelphia Water Works, the Colonization Society, the Franklin Institute, the House of Refuge, the Deaf and Dumb Institution, through James J. Barclay, Esq., and the State Lunatic Hospital at Harrisburg.

The death of a member of the Society, Dr. Carl Ludwig Rümker, Director of the Hamburg Observatory, aged 74, was announced by the Secretary.

Mr. Chase, referring again to the Chinese Hong seal exhibited at the last meeting, made some remarks upon the similarity and probable historical connection between the Chinese syllabic characters, and the Hebrew and other alphabets. The character Sin, on the seal, would be a proper hieroglyph for final n, and it is often written in a form corresponding to an old Punic n. This coincidence in two out of four casual characters, is curious. Out of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, Mr. Chase considers that at least fifteen can be selected, which bear meanings identical with meanings attached to similar forms among the Chinese root characters, and every letter of the Roman alphabet has

one or more strongly marked analogues in Chinese. The resemblances are so numerous and striking, especially between the Chinese cursive and our running hand, that it is difficult to resist the conviction that the parallel forms have a common origin.

The traditions of mythology, if rightly interpreted, would perhaps aid us in tracing alphabetic writing to its source. Although Cæcrops, the reputed founder of Athens, is said to have led a colony from Egypt, he has never been credited with the introduction of any portion of the Egyptian learning. But we are told that Cadmus, the Phœnician, brought letters into Greece, and that on his entrance into Bœotia, he slew the dragon that guarded the fountain of Mars. By the direction of the Goddess of Wisdom, he sowed the dragon's teeth, and armed men immediately sprang up, of whom all but five perished in a mutual contest. With the assistance of the remainder, he built the city of Cadmea, or Thebes.

Morrison, in his English-Chinese Dictionary, under "Dragon," speaks of the draco, which was the standard of the Roman cohort, and the draconarii, who were the standard-bearers, but he makes no attempt to connect the Cadmean legend with the Chinese. The Lung, or dragon, "the watcher,"\* has been the Chinese imperial emblem from time immemorial. It is not only borne on all the royal standards, but it is embroidered or impressed on the clothing, the furniture, and all other articles belonging to the emperor. If we suppose that on the arrival of Cadmus in Bœotia, he routed the Chinese viceroy of the country,—that he fomented a civil war among the Chinese colonists (or dragon's teeth),—that the war raged until the survivors were glad to submit to the rule of the Phœnician adventurer, and that he was wise enough to use all the elements of education and civilization in which the former colonists surpassed his own,—the myth becomes intelligible, and points to the probable origin of Greek culture, in one of the early outpourings of that Asiatic hive, that has repeatedly sent its swarms over the plains of Europe, as pioneers in the westward march of empire.

The horse, which Neptune is said to have presented to the Greeks, and the fountain of Mars, may also have a possible pointing towards

\* The verbs *dr̥g*, and *loc*, in Sanscrit, both denote watchfulness. The former is akin to the Greek *δέρκοω*, *δράκων*, and the latter may have a common origin with the Chinese *lung*. Compare Ch. *mang*, Latin *magn-*, Gr. *μακ-*; Ch. *ping*, Gr. *πηνυ-*, L. *pac*.

Eastern Asia as the source of civilization. The root *ma* in Chinese, signifies "a horse; enraged; martial-like," and it might easily be presumed that the name of Mars was derived from the same root. This coincidence of etymological forms, taken in connection with the well-known fact, that the Phenicians had a perfect alphabet at a time when the use of hieroglyphics in Egypt was nearly or quite universal, may prove to be of some importance.

Prof. Booth, Mr. Foulke, Prof. Coppée, the Rev. Mr. Barnes, Dr. Coates, Prof. Lesley, and Dr. Bache continued the discussion of the subject.

Prof. Booth invited the attention of the members present to the analysis of Delaware and Schuylkill water, by Profs. Booth and Garrett, on page 75 of the lately published Report of the Chief Engineer of the Philadelphia Water Works for 1862.

Pending nominations Nos. 481 to 483, and new nominations Nos. 484 to 490, were read.

The resolutions postponed from the last meeting were laid on the table.

And the Society was adjourned.

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*Stated Meeting, March 6, 1863.*

Present, eighteen members.

Dr. WOOD, President, in the Chair.

Letters accepting membership were received from M. J. Boucher de Perthes, President of the Imperial Society of Emulation, at Abbeville, in France, dated February 9th; from M. Frédéric Troyon, of Lausanne, in Switzerland, dated February 10th, and from Dr. A. A. Henderson, U. S. N., dated United States Steam Sloop Richmond, New Orleans, February 20th, 1863.

Donations for the Library were received from Prof. Secchi, the Royal Astronomical and American Oriental Societies,